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ABSTRACT

This publication contains assumptions, problems, and statement of the basic idea for 10 questions relating to career education. The questions concern the desirability, probability, and limitations of concepts dealing with: (1) exchange programs between business-industry-labor personnel and school personnel, (2) student field trips, (3) work experience, (4) school-industry job placement programs, (5) occupational resource persons from the business-industry-labor community, (6) year-round school in session for 16 hours a day, six days a week, and staffed partly by business-labor-industrial personnel, (7) using retired workers as resource persons, (8) work should become more personally satisfying, and (9) every student should leave school equipped with a marketable job skill and if he desires, be able to find work. (SB)

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Washington

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QUESTIONS FOR RESOLUTION

IN

CAREER EDUCATION

Dr. Kenneth B. Hoyt

National Conference on Career Education

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WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS OF:

1. The concept of exchange programs between business-labor-industry personnel and school personnel?

2. The concept of field trips for students?

3. The concept of work experience for all high school students?

4. The concept of school-industry job placement programs?

5. The concept of establishing occupational resource persons from the business-industry-labor community?

6. The concept of the year-round school running 16 hours a day, 6 days a week, and staffed partly by business-labor-industrial personnel?

7. The concept of using retired workers as resource persons in schools to acquaint students with the world of work?

8. The concept that work should become more personally satisfying to the individual worker?

9. The concept that every student leaving school should be equipped with a marketable job skill?

10. The concept that every student leaving school should, if he desires, be able to find work?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS OF:

1. The concept of exchange programs between business-labor-industry personnel and school personnel?

Basic Idea:

It has been proposed that exchange programs be initiated whereby school teachers, counselors, and administrators would spend anywhere from a few days to a few months working for pay outside of education and that business-labor-industry personnel be invited to spend some time teaching their occupational skills to high school students and adult education students.

Assumptions:

1. School personnel often lack an understanding or appreciation of the world of work outside of education. Many have never worked outside the school. If educators are to teach students about the broader occupational society, it is essential that they actually experience what it is like to work in the free enterprise system.

2. Business-labor-industrial personnel have many things to teach students about work that today's teachers are not equipped to teach. In addition, some occupational skills needed by today's students aren't taught in public schools, but could be taught by workers possessing such skills.

Problems:

1. Could industry afford to pay educators for the work they do in the business-labor-industry setting? If not, who should?

2. Do jobs exist that would provide educators the kinds of experience they need and still require a short enough training period so that educators could be productive on such jobs?

3. Could industry afford to release some skilled personnel to work in schools part of the year? Could equipment required for teaching also be made available? Should the training be done in school buildings or at the actual work site?

4. Should teacher certification requirements be changed so that business-labor-industrial representatives could be employed part-time as teachers?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS OF:

2. The concept of field trips for students?

Basic Idea:

Career Education advocates have proposed that extensive field trip programs be developed so that students (and their teachers) from K-12 have a wide variety of opportunities to observe workers actually performing in various kinds of occupations and work settings. In the elementary school, pupils could learn to appreciate work and the necessity for work. In the junior high school, pupils could see occupations in each of the 15 USOE occupational clusters. In the senior high years, students would observe workers in their tentative areas of occupational choice.

Assumptions:

1. Most students will be more likely to enter jobs in the geographic area where they are growing up. Thus, it is important that they learn about work in that area.

2. Pupils can't learn about the world of work only in textbooks. They need to see work being done at the worksite.

3. Teachers would acquire some much needed information about occupations and implications of their subject matter for those occupations if they take students on field trips.

Problems:

1. How could industry handle constant calls for field trips so that some work settings are not so bothered as to hamper productivity while others never have visitors?

2. How could industry and school personnel work together so as to ensure that new learnings result from such field trips and repetitive duplication of students' experiences are avoided?

3. Who would or could answer student questions raised during field trips? Followup questions that are sure to come after the field trip is over?

4. What kinds of practical plant safety requirements argue against the desirability of field trips?

5. Would it be better to have small student committees, rather than entire classes, make field trips?

6. Do field trips for students affect industry insurance rates?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS OF:

3. The concept of work experience for all high school students?

Basic idea:

It has been proposed that some systematic means be provided to ensure that no student leave high school without some actual work experience, paid or unpaid in nature, that would let him or her actually know the rewards and satisfactions that can come from work. Too many students are now passing through our schools who have never worked. They find themselves forced to make occupational choices before they even have experienced what it is like to work.

Assumptions:

1. High school students have typically made some tentative occupational choices. By having a chance to work in a setting where that occupation exists, they will acquire a more realistic basis for the choices they have made.

2. If prospective college students acquire some work experience while in high school, they will be more motivated to think about college as preparation for work. In addition, they will gain more respect and appreciation for persons whose work does not require college attendance. Finally, they may be more motivated to work while going to college.

3. Students in the general curriculum need work experience even though they are not acquiring specific job skills in vocational education. Vocational education students need work experience even if it is not in the field for which they are being trained.

Problems:

1. Can enough jobs, paid or unpaid, be created so that all high school students can get some work experience? How much should they have? Should they have some each year?

2. When would high school students work? Must we think of an extended school day? Should we think only of a summer program?

3. Should work experience be required of all students or should it be offered as an elective? If it is required, what do we do with the student who doesn't want to work?

4. Should work experience programs establish a goal that every student is paid for the work he or she does? Many aren't capable of producing enough to really earn today's required minimum wage. Can reduced wages be paid?

5. Would massive high school work experience programs result in firing of some currently employed person? If so, what is to be done about this?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS TO:

4. The concept of school-industry job placement programs?

Basic idea: It has been proposed that every high school and post high school educational institution build, in cooperation with the business-labor-industry community, an aggressive job development and job placement program. Career Education advocates are fond of saying that, whenever a student leaves a school, he should either be ready for a job or for further education. The ratio of youth to adult unemployment, having risen for the last several years, is now over 5:1. Career Education will be a farce if it succeeds in helping youth want to work, gives them the skills required to work, but fails to help them find work when they leave school.

Assumptions:

1. The USES system of youth job placement services is not now and shows no signs of becoming adequate to meet the needs of youth for work and the needs of employers for qualified applicants.

2. Both employers and school systems would have much to gain from cooperative efforts to establish an aggressive and effective job placement program. Motivation should be present.

3. If really effective job placement programs existed, youth unemployment statistics would decline sharply from their current levels. It is not assumed that youth unemployment can drop as low as adult unemployment.

Problems:

1. How could a placement data bank, containing current, valid data regarding both job seekers and job vacancies, be established and maintained?

2. Should USES be asked to participate in the program? To coordinate the program? To pay for it?

3. Should schools and the business-labor-industry community share the costs of the job placement program?

4. What system could guarantee job placement services for the former student who wishes to work in another part of the country?

5. Should we be thinking of a program that concerns itself with the total problem of transition from school to work - including follow-up of new workers or is a job placement program as much as we can handle?

6. Who is responsible for the student who, after leaving school, can't find a job?

7. Should all students be required to register at the placement office or only those who will shortly be seeking work?

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If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS TO:

5. The concept of establishing occupational resource persons from the business-industry-labor community?

Basic idea:

Many Career Education programs, through both parental and local civic associations, have established large lists of workers from a very wide variety of occupations. Each worker has volunteered to respond, through either phone calls or personal contacts, to requests for information about his or her occupation that come from students, teachers, or counselors. In addition, some volunteer to present information and answer questions before groups of students in the classroom.

Assumptions:

1. Workers are the most valid source of information about life styles involved in occupations. It is better to find out what an occupation is really like from one who is in it than from an article describing it. Employed workers who are successful in their jobs can serve as effective models for youth?

2. Many employed workers will be willing to volunteer their efforts to help youth have more intelligent vocational choices.

Problems:

1. To what extent do workers need special training in order to perform this service? Who will provide it?

2. How can we be sure that persons volunteering to participate are the kinds of individuals we need?

3. Should both workers who are happy and those unhappy in their occupations be on the list? If only fully satisfied persons are selected, are we unduly biasing youth?

4. Should more than one worker from each occupation be chosen? Since each is in a different job, do we need more than one so that an occupation, rather than a job, can be discussed?

5. Will industry let people off to speak to students in schools?

6. Many of these contacts will result in students asking to see the worker at the job site. Is this something that can be done effectively or should it be discouraged?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS TO:

6. The concept of the year-round school running 16 hours a day 6 days a week and staffed partly by business-labor-industrial personnel?

Basic Idea:

The year-round high school seems essential to many advocates of Career Education. Under this concept, school facilities would be open 16 hours a day 6 days a week 12 months each year and would enroll both youth and adults. Advantages inherent in this concept include: (a) Students could choose their school hours based, in part, on when they could get work experience or work-study arrangements in the business-labor-industry community; (b) Business-labor-industry personnel could teach in the school program without losing time from their regular jobs; (c) Academic teachers could get work experience in industry on a staggered basis since they would be employed on a 12 months basis; and (d) Students would be graduating each month during the year (rather than only in June) which should make the job placement problem easier.

Assumptions:

1. School buildings are too expensive to be utilized only part of the day or part of the year.

2. Putting teachers on 12 month, rather than 9 month contracts, would be more efficient and, in the long run, save taxpayers money.

3. Public schools must take much more responsibility for adult education and education of current out-of-school youth than is currently being done. This would save money over the cost of running remedial non-power programs.

4. Personnel from business-labor-industry are capable of teaching their vocational skills to others.

Problems:

1. Is industry ready to support the concept of the year-round school? Initially, it might mean higher taxes. It certainly would demand full cooperation of the business-labor-industry personnel in making available both equipment and personnel.

2. Is there a place for industry's effort to upgrade and retrain workers in the concept of the year-round school?

3. What would be the public's reactions to find (a) students on vacation at various times during the year; (b) some students going to school at night

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rather than during the day; and (c) some classes that contained a mixture of high school students and adults?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS TO:

7. The concept of using retired workers as resource persons in schools to acquaint students with the world of work?

Basic Idea:

Several Career Education programs have placed great emphasis on using retired workers as resource persons for Career Education. They have identified such persons from a wide variety of occupational fields. Once identified and solicited, such persons meet with students, teachers, and counselors to discuss their former occupations as it might apply to today's students. They talk about the work values that are meaningful to them, demonstrate the specific vocational skills they used on their jobs, and express their personal opinions regarding their former occupation and the life style it led to.

Assumptions:

1. Retired workers have a strong need to continue feeling useful and valuable. To ask them to participate in Career Education offers them a way to enhance their own personal feelings of self worth and provides students with valuable insights regarding life styles associated with various kinds of careers.

2. Even if the skills of the retired worker are no longer in demand, students can learn much from such workers regarding the values of a work oriented society. Additionally, students can receive graphic illustrations regarding ways in which technology speeds occupational change.

Problems:

1. To what extent can retired workers give high school students a realistic view of work and occupations in our current society?

2. How valuable is it to have a retired worker talk about his former occupation without being able to show students the actual work place itself?

3. How valid a view of today's occupational society can be expected to be presented by retired workers? Is change occurring so fast as to make their memories irrelevant to the informational needs of today's youth?

4. Can and should the business-labor-industry community work with schools in recruiting retired persons for Career Education?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS TO:

8. The concept that work should become more personally satisfying to the individual worker?

Basic Idea:

The goals of Career Education are to make work possible, meaningful, and satisfying to each individual. We know we can make the concept of work meaningful and, for most persons, we can make work possible. However, the extent to which work can be satisfying is a function of the work place itself. Studies of worker alienation and causes of worker dissatisfaction are currently very popular. People seem to delight in talking about the inhuman treatment given workers. They speak about the need to give workers more autonomy, more variety in their work tasks, and a clearer picture of the importance of each man's work to the "big picture." Many educators are currently resisting Career Education's emphasis on work because they feel that, to ready youth for today's work place, would be to condition them to expect inhumane treatment. Others question whether the situation in the work place is as bas as it has been pictured.

Assumptions:

1. Worker satisfaction should lead to greater productivity and so should be a goal of employers as well as educators.

2. The goal of making work more satisfying to the worker is a valid and viable goal for Career Education to embrace.

Problems:

1. If work is made more possible and meaningful to individuals, is it likely that it will automatically also become more satisfying? If additional tasks are involved, what are they?

2. How can one give workers more freedom to make their own work decisions while still maintaining the essential concept of the discipline of the work place? How far can you go in letting workers "do their own thing" and still make it clear that everyone has a "boss"?

3. Can and should school systems be involved in the task of making work more satisfying -- or is this strictly up to the business-labor-industry community? If school systems have a role to play here, what is that role?

4. Is the problem of current worker dissatisfaction really a major one? Or is this something that has been over-emphasized?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS TO:

9. The concept that every student leaving school should be equipped with a marketable job skill?

Basic Idea:

One of the most pervasive ideas of the U. S. Office of Education's career education emphasis has been that the student should leave the educational system without a marketable job skill. Some will, of course, go right from high school to college, but, even when they leave college, they will have a marketable job skill. This emphasis has grown out of a realization that, at both the secondary school and collegiate levels, many students are currently being graduated who have no specific job skills. With less than 25% of today's high school graduates becoming eventual college graduates, this idea can become a reality only if vocational education programs are greatly expanded at both the secondary and at the post secondary school levels.

Assumptions:

1. It is possible to provide school leavers with marketable job skills even though they may not be sufficient for a very long period of time.

2. This is a worthy goal for American Education.

3. The general public will support the vast increases in vocational education called for to convert this goal into a reality.

Problems:

1. Does this goal ignore the potential of OJT training and apprenticeship training in the business-industry-labor community? If so, what is industry's answer to this goal?

2. Is it realistic to suppose that we know enough about the changing nature of the occupational society so that we could, given sufficient resources, really give every school leaver an immediately marketable job skill?

3. Should not some students feel free to enjoy a purely liberal arts education without feeling guilty that, by doing so, they are acquiring no specific marketable job skills?

4. Does industry really want entry workers with specific job skills, or would they prefer to develop such skills after the man or woman is employed?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?

WHAT IS THE DESIRABILITY, PRACTICAL PROBABILITY, AND PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS TO:

10. The concept that every student leaving school should, if he desires, be able to find work?

Basic Idea:

Career Education seeks to help all students acquire a desire to work. An essential ingredient here is a promise, either explicit or implicit in nature, that those who want to work can find work to do. With the ratio of youth to adult unemployment having risen each year since 1960 (from 2.2:1 to 5.5:1), it is obvious that it will be difficult to guarantee work, in the form of paid employment, to each youth who may desire to work. At the same time, it is obvious that it is a farce if we instill in students a desire to work, provide them with job skills, but ignore the actual availability of paid employment. To try to solve this problem by convincing youth that volunteer, unpaid workers are always in demand will not "wash well" with today's youth culture.

Assumptions:

1. The current rate of unemployment, for both youth and adults, is capable of being reduced.

2. The trend of the last 13 years towards a higher and higher ratio of youth to adult unemployment, can be reversed.

Problems:

1. Is it realistic to promise availability of work to youth in view of the current labor market conditions?

2. Can Career Education appeal to youth if we fail to promise work is available to adequately prepared persons?

3. If we promote a concept of work that includes volunteers as well as paid employment, do we run the risk of giving youth an unrealistic view of work?

4. Should the government initiate youth work programs for those unable to find paid employment in the free enterprise system?

5. Is the creation of an all-volunteer armed forces a necessary ingredient for giving viability to this concept?

If the concept is feasible, how do you think it can best be achieved? What is the major obstacle that must be overcome?